

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 9, 11 and 12 and add new claims 13-16 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A seat storing structure for a vehicle, comprising:

a seat including a seat cushion provided on a floor in a passenger compartment of the vehicle, a seat back supported by a rear portion of said seat cushion, and a headrest supported by said seat back, and constructed so as to selectively attain a seating state where said seat back is erected in the vicinity of the rear portion of said seat cushion or a folded state where said seat back is folded down forward onto said seat cushion;

a pivotally supporting mechanism provided between said seat and the floor for supporting said seat and pivoting the seat rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state; ~~and~~

a recess formed in the floor behind said seat for storing said seat such that a surface of said seat cushion is substantial alignment with the floor after said seat has been pivoted rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state; ; and

~~wherein said headrest is supported by said seat back so as to shift between a first state where said headrest is located at the top of said seat back with said seat in the seating state, and a second state where said headrest is located on a back surface of said seat back and within paths of pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state.~~

a headrest pivotally-supporting mechanism provided between said seat back and said headrest for pivotally supporting headrest with respect to said seat back so as to allow the headrest to shift between a first state where the headrest is located at the top of the seat back with said seat in the seating state and a second state where the headrest is located on

a back surface of the seat back and within paths of pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state.

2. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 1, wherein the outer periphery of the path of the pivotal motion of said seat cushion and the outer periphery of the path of the pivotal motion of said seat back are substantially identical to each other during the rearward pivotal motion of said seat with said seat being in the folded state and said headrest being in the second state.

3. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 2, wherein an upper and rear edge of said recess is substantially on the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat cushion and the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat back.

4. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 1, wherein the pivotally supporting mechanism includes a pivotal axis at which said seat is pivotally supported, and supports said seat so as to locate the rear edge of said seat in the seating state at a portion rearward of the front edge of said recess, and the pivotal axis is located between the rear edge of said seat and the front edge of said recess with respect to the longitudinal direction of the vehicle.

5. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 1, wherein the back surface of said seat back is formed with a depression that accommodates said headrest in the second state.

6. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 1, wherein said headrest is in contact with both said seat back and a bottom surface of said recess within a space defined between said seat back and the bottom surface of said recess, when said seat has been stored in said recess.

7. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 3, wherein the vehicle includes an opening portion formed behind said seat and a hatch door for opening and closing the opening portion, and said pivotally supporting mechanism, said seat cushion, and said seat back are configured such that said seat causes no interference with the hatch door being closed while said seat in the folded state is being pivoted rearward.

8. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 7, wherein the distance between the pivotal axis and an inboard surface of the hatch door is longer than the distance between the pivotal axis and the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat cushion, and longer than the distance between the pivotal axis and the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat back.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A seat storing structure for a vehicle ~~as defined in Claim 1,~~ comprising:

a seat including a seat cushion provided on a floor in a passenger compartment of the vehicle, a seat back supported by a rear portion of said seat cushion, and a headrest supported by said seat back, and constructed so as to selectively attain a seating state where said seat back is erected in the vicinity of the rear portion of said seat cushion or folded state where said seat back is folded down forward onto said seat cushion;

a pivotally supporting mechanism provided between said seat and the floor for supporting said seat and pivoting the seat rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state; and

a recess formed in the floor behind said seat for storing said seat such that a surface of said seat cushion is substantial alignment with the floor after said seat has been pivoted rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state,

wherein said headrest is supported by said seat back so as to shift between a first state where said headrest is located at the top of said seat back with said seat in the seating state, and a second state where said headrest is located on a back surface of said seat back and within paths of pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushions with said seat maintaining the folded state, and

wherein a silencer is provided beneath the floor, the silencer having an elliptic-cylindrical shape and disposed in front of the recess such that its longitudinal direction is oriented substantially in the width direction of the vehicle and the major axis of an ellipsoid as its cross-section is oriented substantially in the vertical direction of the vehicle.

10. (Original) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 9, wherein the floor is slanted such that its rear portion is situated higher than its front portion.

11. (Currently Amended) A seat storing structure for a vehicle comprising:
a seat including a seat cushion provided on a floor in a passenger compartment of the vehicle, a seat back supported by a rear portion of said seat cushion, and a headrest supported by said seat back, and constructed so as to selectively attain a seating state, where said seat back is erected in the vicinity of the rear portion of said seat cushion, or a folded state, where said seat back is folded down forward onto said seat cushion;

a pivotally supporting mechanism provided between said seat and the floor for supporting said seat and pivoting said seat rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state;
~~said pivotally supporting mechanism including a pivotal axis at which said seat is~~

~~pivotaly supported and supporting said seat so as to locate the rear edge of said seat in the seating state at a portion rearward of the front edge of said recess,~~

~~the pivotal axis being located between the rear edge of said seat and the front edge of said recess with respect to a longitudinal direction of the vehicle, and~~

a recess formed in the floor behind said seat for storing said seat such that a lower surface of said seat cushion is substantial alignment with the floor after the overall seat has been pivoted rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state; and

~~wherein said headrest is supported to said seat back so as to shift between a first state where said headrest is located at the top of said seat back with said seat in the seating state, and a second state where said headrest is located on a back surface of said seat back and at the inside of paths of the pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state, and~~

a headrest pivotaly-supporting mechanism provided between said seat back and said headrest for pivotaly supporting said headrest with respect to said seat back so as to allow the headrest to shift between a first state where the headrest is located at the top of the seat back with said seat in the seating state and a second state where the headrest is located on a back surface of the seat back and within paths of pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state,

wherein said pivotaly supporting mechanism includes a pivotal axis at which said seat is pivotaly supported and supports said seat so as to locate the rear edge of said seat in the seating state at a portion rearward of the front edge of said recess, and said pivotal axis is located between the rear edge of said seat and the front edge of said recess with respect to the longitudinal direction of the vehicle; and

wherein an upper and rear edge of said recess is substantially on the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat cushion and the outer periphery of the path drawn by the pivotal motion of said seat back.

12. (Currently Amended) A seat storing structure for a vehicle comprising:

a seat including a seat cushion provided on a floor in a passenger compartment of the vehicle, a seat back supported by a rear portion of said seat cushion, and a headrest supported by said seat back, and constructed so as to selectively attain a seating state, where said seat back is erected in the vicinity of the rear portion of said seat cushion, or a folded state, where said seat back is folded down forward onto said seat cushion;

a pivotally supporting mechanism provided between said seat and the floor for supporting said seat and pivoting said seat rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state, ~~and;~~

a recess formed in the floor behind said seat for storing said seat such that a lower surface of said seat cushion is substantial alignment with the floor after the overall seat has been pivoted rearward with said seat maintaining the folded state, ~~;~~ and

~~wherein said headrest is supported by said seat back so as to shift between a first state where said headrest is located at the top of said seat back with said seat in the seating state, and a second state where said headrest is located on a back surface of said seat back and at the inside of paths of the pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state, and~~

a headrest pivotally-supporting mechanism provided between said seat back and said headrest for pivotally supporting said headrest with respect to said seat back so as to allow the headrest to shift between a first state where the headrest is located at the top of the seat back with said seat in the seating state and a second state where the headrest is located on

a back surface of the seat back and within paths of pivotal motions of said seat back and seat cushion with said seat maintaining the folded state,

wherein the floor is slanted such that its rear portion is situated higher than its front portion.

13. (New) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 1,
wherein said headrest pivotally-supporting mechanism comprises a bracket which is fixed to a seat back frame of said seat back, and a rotational member which is supported by said bracket pivotally about an axis and fixed to a headrest frame of said headrest.

14. (New) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 13,
wherein said headrest pivotally-supporting mechanism further comprises a lock mechanism operative to restrict a rotation of said rotational member so as to lock said headrest in said first state.

15. (New) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 14,
wherein said rotational member is comprised of a pipe member, and said lock mechanism comprises a headrest sleeve member which is fixed to said pipe member of the rotational member, a seat back sleeve member which is fixed to said seat back frame, and a rod member which is operative to be inserted into both said headrest sleeve member and said seat back sleeve member so as to restrict the rotation of said pipe member of the rotational member.

16. (New) The seat storing structure for a vehicle as defined in Claim 13,
wherein there is further provided a trim member which covers the back surface of said seat back; and a cutaway portion is formed at said trim member so as to allow said

headrest frame to move therethrough for shifting of the headrest frame between said first state and second state.